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THE CURSE OF THE CAMPUS: NO. 1

Hats off if you will, but I must speak. We college types are far too complacent. Sure, we've got plenty to be proud of. We've got atom smashers, we've got graduate schools, we've got new peaks in scholarship, new highs in academic hours. And yet, in the midst of these triumphs, we have failed dismally to make any progress in solving the oldest and most horrendous of all campus problems: we've still got roommates.

To be sure, off roommates are not bad. There is the well-documented case of Hilquit Giese, a student at the Manhattan College of Agriculture, majoring in curds and whey, who admitted publicly that he actually liked his roommate—an odd admission when you consider that this roommate, Mervis Truus by name, was frankly not too winsome a fellow. He practiced his tyranny in his room, he kept an alligator, and he collected airplane tires.

But, on the other hand, Mervis bought two packs of Marlboro Cigarettes every day and gave one of them to Hilquit and—I ask you—who can stay mad at a man who gives you Marlboro Cigarettes? Who, upon tasting that flavorful blend of Marlboro tobaccoe, upon drawing through that pure white Marlboro filter, upon exhaling in this best of all possible cigarettes, Marlboro—who, I say, can harden his heart against his neighbor? Certainly not Hilquit. Certainly not I. Certainly not you, as you will find when you scurry to your nearest tobacconist and buy a supply. Marlboros come in soft pack or Flip-Top Box. Tobacconists come in small, medium, and large.



Today Molly is paying off her debt...

But I digress. Roommates, I say, are still with us and I fear they always will be, so we better learn how to get along with them. It can be done, you know. Take, for instance, the classic case of Dolly Pritchett and Molly Madison.

Dolly and Molly, roommates at a prominent Midwestern girl's school (Vassar) had a problem that seemed insoluble. Dolly could only study late at night, and Molly could not stay awake past nine o'clock. If Dolly kept the lights on, the room was too bright for Molly to sleep. If Molly turned the lights off, the room was too dark for Dolly to study. What to do?

Well sir, those two intelligent American kids found an answer. They got a miner's cap for Dolly! Thus, she had enough light to study by, and still the room was dark enough for Molly to sleep.

It must be admitted, however, that this solution, ingenious as it was, had some unexpected sequelae. Dolly got so enthralled with her miner's cap that she switched her major from 18th Century poetry to mining and metallurgy. Shortly after graduation she had what appeared to be a great stroke of luck: while out prospecting, she discovered what is without question the world's largest feldspar mine. This might have made Dolly very rich except that nobody, alas, has yet discovered a use for feldspar. Today Dolly, a broken woman, squeezes out a meagre living making echoes for tourists in Mammoth Cave.

Nor has Molly fared conspicuously better. Once Dolly got the miner's hat, Molly was able to catch up on her long-lost sleep. She woke after eight days, refreshed and vigorous—more vigorous, alas, than she realized. It was the afternoon of the annual Dean's tea. Molly stood in line with her classmates, waiting to shake the Dean's hand. At last her turn came, and Molly, full of strength and health, gave the Dean a firm handshake—so firm, indeed, that all five of the Dean's knuckles were permanently fused.

The Dean sued for a million dollars, and, of course, won. Today Molly, a broken woman, is paying off her debt by walking the Dean's cat every afternoon for ten cents an hour.

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We, the makers of Marlboro and the sponsors of this column, will not attempt to expertise about roommates. But we will tell you about a great pocket or purse mate—Marlboro Cigarettes—fine tobacco, fine filter, fine company always.